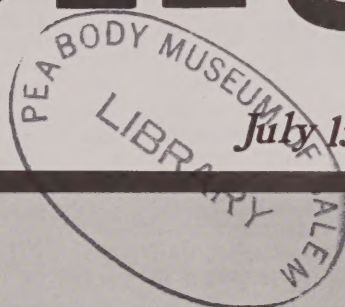




messing about in BOATS

Twice a Month!

Volume 8 ~ Number 5



July 15, 1990





messing about in BOATS

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Our Next Issue...

Will feature our coverage of
the Albany (NY) Wooden Boat Festi-
val held in late June, an outstand-
ing success. In whatever room we
have left over we will bring you
three cautionary tales about small
boats on big waters, and a sort of
travelogue on "Storybook Rivers of
the Maryland Eastern Shore". From
amongst the many designs and pro-
jects in hand we'll pick what we
can find room for from amongst a
pair of punts, a kayakamaran for
paraplegics, a look at the new "Su-
perbrick" from Bolger, a canoe
built of recycled paper, etc. In the
wings are dozens more articles on
adventures afloat and projects
ashore.

On the Cover...

Is a picture of a man trying
to tip over a canoe. No, he's actu-
ally demonstrating how to almost
tip over a canoe while paddling it
in what is known as "freestyle"
technique. Just one scene from the
North American Canoe Symposium at
Bridgeton, ME, held in early June,
and covered in detail in this issue.

Commentary

**BOB
HICKS**

The reliving of the explora-
tions of an earlier era, one hardly
two centuries old, has been made
possible for "ordinary people" today
by much faster access to the barren
lands. One can drive far into the
north today by truck, and then be
flown the rest of the way by bush
pilots who have a unique business
going in such work. It's possible
to get to a very remote starting
point hundreds of miles from the
last outpost of civilization today in
just a few days. Then one can be
off on weeks of solitary adventur-
ing, travelling some truly wild
river hundreds of miles, living off
supplies carried along, seeing no-
body else but one's companions, if
any. And when the end of the trip
is reached, a plane will come and
pick up the adventurers and return
them to the real world. Enroute,
should anything go wrong, radio or
emergency beacons will summon
help from the air.

This all makes me, an arm-
chair sort, really appreciate what
the original explorers did. For
whatever reason, usually one with
commercial profit behind it, once a
group set out on an exploration,
they were truly on their own. No

Small boat adventures abound,
and sooner or later, those of the
most demanding sort tend to head
for the arctic wastes. There's an
allure that some people find hard to
resist that radiates from that bar-
ren and hostile part of the world.
No people around, emptiness every-
where, space in abundance. A pret-
ty good replica of what it must
have once been like to be an ex-
plorer of uncharted lands and wa-
ters can be experienced in such a
land.

The canoe seems to be the
craft of choice for these arctic ad-
ventures today, most of which in-
volve running major rivers that
empty into the Arctic Ocean. The
canoe is an established river craft,
can be maneuvered successfully
through some pretty demanding
water conditions, carries enough
gear to support long term travel
away from supply sources, and can
be backpacked when the water is
too rugged or too little.

No longer is it only the pro-
fessional explorer or adventurer
who heads for the arctic. People
like you and I are doing it, people
with sufficient skills to contend
with the technical demands the riv-
ers make and with the emotional
balance needed to not only endure
the isolation and required self-suf-
ficiency, but also to actually rel-
ish it. They are not armchair ad-
venturers, but they are not profes-
sionals either. Skilled and talented
amateurs is probably the best de-
scription of these folks.

charts or maps, no radio contact,

no airlifting. Off into what was
really an unknown, with at best
information from the indigenous na-
tive population, indians and eski-
mos, who sparsely populated the far
north.

One modern adventurer I know
personally, Robert Perkins, decided
to paddle the 600 mile long Back
River, starting from Great Slave
Lake, crossing a height of land to
the headwaters of the Back, and
then canoeing solo for some 6
weeks down that stream. He had
been inspired to do this from read-
ing the journal of George Back,
who was a British army officer who
had been assigned the task of tak-
ing a group of troops overland from
the Hudson Bay Company post on
Great Slave Lake to the arctic to
look for signs of the lost Franklin
expedition, which had set sail to
discover the Northwest Passage
several years before, and had not
been heard from since.

Robert had a light, special-
ly-built canoe, an emergency posi-
tion indicator beacon, and a
mid-trip rendezvous with some
friends and film people who flew in
to catch some of the trip on film
for a subsequent documentary. But
he was alone and dealt with all
that implies in so lonely a land.
When he arrived at the end of his
trip, he was picked up by a bush
plane.

George Back and his troops
had to hike into Great Slave Lake,
build river bateaus there, get
these up over the intervening high
ground to the river that now bears
his name and that was presumed to
go to the Arctic Ocean, and head
downstream without charts or know-
ledge of what lay ahead. This they
did, and after scouting the shores
of the Arctic Ocean where the river
ended, and finding no sign of
Franklin, they turned around and
rowed those bateaus back up that
600 miles! All this involved a lot
of time and being out there other
than in the brief summer months.
Yet, Back did not lose a man.

This is not to belittle the ac-
complishments of today's adventur-
ers. It is to put into perspective
how things have changed, how to-
day an adventure, while demanding
and risky, simply does not have
the implacable demands upon one's
self-reliance that men scarcely
two-hundred years ago, even less
than one-hundred years ago in some
instances, had to face up to. Today
such adventuring is a lark, pur-
sued for reasons of personal re-
ward. When these places were first
explored, the people doing it were
working at their jobs. And they
were truly out of touch with the
rest of the world, alone in the
wilderness, and they'd better not
make any big mistakes.

Paddling Around

MANSFIELD HOLLOW CANOE DAY

Mansfield Hollow Canoe Day, an gala event sponsored by a number of organizations in eastern Connecticut, was held on May 20, a cold overcast Sunday. As soon as I arrived, I regretted not bringing my camera, for the scene was lively and cheerful despite the wintry weather. There were two tents with bulletin boards, posters and pennants, where information was available; one representing the Connecticut Canoe Racing Association and the other the Columbia Canoe Club, whose recently acquired clubhouse was just up the path towards Mansfield Hollow Dam. Along the lakeside were some half-dozen stations at which enthusiasts were readying brightly colored canoes and kayaks of every description for demonstrations.

I found myself attracted to the sea kayak exhibition conducted by Jim Ellis of Blue Heron Kayaks, who demonstrated a self-rescue float which worked something like an outrigger on his nifty Northwest Kayak "Esprit". Later he put together a Nautiraid "Packer", a tandem folding kayak that swallowed up without a trace a tent, two sleeping bags, two backpacks, a cook kit and various other camping paraphernalia. Jim convincingly made the case that for the camper who loves to be on the water, a sea kayak is the way to go.

Chuck Herrick and Sue Audette of the Columbia Canoe Club demonstrated how to paddle and maneuver canoes and kayaks with some help from brave souls who reluctantly performed eskimo rolls in the frigid water. Most of the high school set were attracted to the kayaks and took their turns trying them out, while old folks tried their luck in canoes.

In addition to basic instruction, Canoe Day featured a poling demonstration by Nelson Walker, a whitewater rolling clinic by Dave Sheddric, Olympic sprint races, war canoe rides, a flatwater racing clinic, canoe games, a clinic on wilderness tripping, and a celebrity canoe race.

As I was about to leave for the graduation exercises at the university, I counted a crowd of more than fifty, with cars and vans still arriving. As Rick Weber, president of the Connecticut Canoe Racing Association suggested, there appears to be a revived interest in paddling craft, particularly among the young. It is interesting to note that though both sponsoring organizations were founded to promote racing, they now actively encourage the more casual paddler.

Jim Lacey, Willimantic, CT.

THIS WATER IS MOVING!

Oh, no, what do I do now? What do I do with this water, it's moving! If I stop paddling even for a moment, whole worlds go by and, oh no, I have to do something quickly, I'm about to go crashing over a bunch of rocks! Oh, now I'm going backwards, I just made that reverse gate with a conservative upstream ferry, but now I'm wildly rushing downstream backwards. I had better turn around quickly before I wash over those nasty rocks looming up downstream.

This is too fast, we don't have to deal with this in sea kayaking except in rips, and even then I usually know what to do about it. I'm okay and things are predictable. This river is fast, too fast. Oh no, now that I've turned around facing forward again, things are still happening too fast, just too fast. All right now, back paddle, slow down, now make the next gate. But now the current is sweeping me into those rocks. I have to figure out how to do these eddy turns without losing speed and directional control. Now I have to fight upstream to get through that gate, the eddy is forcing me into the rocks and the current is trying to drag me downstream. I'm supposed to be going upstream with some better directional control. I feel helpless, I have much to learn.

For the next gate I had best ferry with my bow at 180 degrees to the current, if I let my bow fall off I won't make the reverse gate. Keep that bow upstream. Okay, go through the reverse gate. No, don't touch those poles. Oh, this is close, I don't like this, I thought that I had this gate lined up perfectly and now I'm being carried off terribly close to one of the poles. Next time I'll try to figure out better what I should be doing to keep control passing through a gate.

This is fun, and I like the challenge of the whitewater. The more I learn about whitewater paddling technique and gain an understanding of how the water behaves, the better paddler I will be in all sorts of situations. There is much more to paddling than just propelling the kayak along, and even though this Class 1 whitewater seems complicated, I am looking forward to learning more of these whitewater paddling skills.

Gail Ferris, Stony Creek, CT.

THE ULTIMATE WHITE WATER

Perhaps you heard or saw in the news about the paddler who went over Niagara Falls on June 6th. According to the published reports, Jessie Sharp, who lived on the Ocoee River in Tennessee, apparently expected to survive the falls, for he had made dinner reservations for that evening, and had friends on hand filming his attempt at running the "ultimate whitewater".

Sharp's body was not recovered, but his boat, a 13' downriver kayak, was found folded over in half. Falls officials said the body might not surface anywhere near the falls, but miles downstream if at all. After going over the falls, Sharp planned to paddle four miles of treacherous rapids below and negotiate a whirlpool before coming ashore at Lewiston, NY, where he had left his car.

Friends stated that Sharp was not suicidal, that he lived to paddle, and that he was confident of his ability to do the trick. The challenge seemed to be that of surmounting a "can't be done" whitewater situation. Until it has been tried, such paddlers speculate on the possibilities. He had been planning the attempt for some ten years, an earlier attempt in 1979 was aborted when friends talked him out of it above the falls. On his kayak was emblazoned the name, "Rapidman".

The proposed technique, according to friends, involved getting going fast enough when he reached the brink that he would arc out beyond the falls and nose dive into the pool 172 feet below, where his boat would then pop back up to the surface. He had been training intensively for the past two years. His boat was supposedly rigged with restraining lines to hold him in it when he hit the bottom of the falls. He was reported to be out on the water on his home rivers when it was too high for anyone else to have a go at it.

While this failed attempt would seem to confirm that Niagara Falls "can't be done", one whitewater expert was quoted as stating that someday it would be, but not with today's equipment. He pointed out that in the past ten years many such "can't be done" sections have been successfully run.

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FUTURE MESSABOUTS

By the time you are reading this report, the next "Messabout" will have taken place on June 10th at Mission Bay in San Diego. Future gatherings are tentatively planned for August 5th, September 9th, October 7th, November 4th and December 2nd. Newport Back Bay and a Lake Perris weekend are being considered. A caravan to Baja is also a possibility.

Continued communication will require some financial support from interested readers. If you've read this far you know by now whether you're interested. If you are, contribute \$5 to get on my mailing list for notices of all upcoming gatherings and issues of my little paper, "SCSBMS News". There ain't no such thing as a free lunch!

Joe Tribulato, 6465 Longridge Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401, (818) 762-8945.

"SHEARWATER" SCOOTs ALONG

Everything was put on the back burner here in late May while I pushed to complete a Joel White "Shearwater" for a young couple. We christened the boat on the 28th, and she rows very nicely, really scoots along under a double set of oars. I'm pleased with the project. Elliot Wilcox, Bayberry Creek Boatshop, 311 Chaffinch Island Rd., Guilford, CT 06437.

WONDERFUL BOATS

I own duckboats. If you believe, as I do, that form follows function, these are wonderful boats.

Here's my renewal, thank you for your personal note. Ordinarily I hear from a publisher's software.

Ted Lundrigan, Pine River, MN

MELLIE MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS

At the Bowdoinham (ME) Town Hall Preservation Fair in the fall of '89, Mellie, our retriever, was photographed "messaging about in boats".

Ed Friedman, Dragonworks, Bowdoinham, ME.



Your Commentary

IDEAL FOR DK CONSTRUCTION?

Some nice articles of late, especially on the small boats which appeal to me. I was particularly interested in the idea of the 3-meter multihull concept put forward by John R. Marples. This seems like a great idea, somewhat along the lines of the mini-12 meter yachts.

I wondered if there would be sufficient interest in the mini-multihull for me to produce a DK version? It seems like an ideal boat for DK construction. Do any readers find this of interest? I'd like to hear from any who do. A DK multihull would depart from my tradition of no more than two sheets of ply, but I still think it would be an economical version of what seems to me to be an interesting class of boats.

The "Sleeper" dinghy (March 15 cover story) was also a novel idea, maybe I should consider designing a deep keel version of my "Imp" dinghy for world cruising. "Boats" certainly attracts some interesting creations in which to get afloat, long may it continue.

Dennis Davis, DK Designs, The Flat, Himbleton Manor, Droitwich, Worcs WR9 7LE, England.

WILL LAUAN DELAMINATE?

Right now I am building a Bolger Zephyr tack-and-tape of 5mm lauan underlayment plywood. I am tempting fate, as a boat I built of the stuff in 1978 delaminated. I have been running a lot of tests lately on the stuff. It won't pass a boil test; I think that's because the thick core distorts so much. It does pass the dishwasher test of leaving a piece in the silverware basket for several weeks. About once a week I dry it and another sample that has been continuously immersed in water for four hours in the kitchen oven at about 150 degrees F. None of them has come apart

Dave Carnell, 322 Pages Creek Dr., Wilmington, NC 28405.

MORE ON GRINDING FIBERGLASS

Regarding Peter Duff's response to the inquiry on grinding fiberglass and cleaning plugged discs, I have found that round aluminum cake pans of sufficient size make great containers and covers for the acetone in which the plugged discs can be soaked. If 7" discs are being used, for example, buy 8" and 9" diameter cake pans. Drop the discs into the 8" pan, add acetone to cover, and cover this with the 9" pan upside down. This greatly reduces evaporation of the acetone. About two hours will loosen the plastic plugging the discs, or you can leave it overnight. This only works on the better quality resin-backed discs, the cheapos turn into mush in the acetone.

The acetone can be filtered through a disposable dust mask and re-used. Keep in mind that all normal warnings apply. Acetone is flammable and explosive, so no flames or sparks; wear rubber gloves that won't dissolve in the solvent; don't drink any, etc....

John Smith, Ambler Boat Works, Lansdale, PA.

FLEA MARKET FLIGHT OF FANCY

I found the following poem folded up in a used book I bought at a flea market. I don't know if the poet was a literary luminary or a local, but suspect the latter after reading it.

Andy Updegrove, Marblehead, MA

"Heard off the Yacht Club Float"

She slid away from her mooring
With never a backward glance,
Unless you count a rippling wake
That pierced his heart like a lance;
She was up and off for the races
With a gay, expectant crowd...
Well, he bobbed away at his mooring,
He was tough all right, and proud.

"Say, Bill", said an old white gull
Checking any chance disclosure,
"Don't let this race stuff get your goat,
It's not the cat's ambrosia. 'Remember, you fetched Owl's Head
In that easterly just last March?
These foreign sharks would have busted
Like sticks of rotten larch.

So he bobbed away at his mooring
In nautical sophistry,
As his bright blue lady-fair and fleet
Picked up her buoy pensively.
She longed for her native Finland
And he for his M.D.I.
For he was the good old "Barnacle Bill",
And she was the "Thousand Eye".
W. Griffin Gribbel, Camden, ME,
August 18, 1933.



Bloated boat looking overfed,
Bellyaching about overhead.

Unless you've got a cartop yacht,
Then overhead's your jolly lot!



Carl Erickson

There is nothing— absolutely nothing—
half so much worth doing

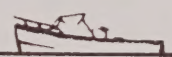


as simply messing about in boats.

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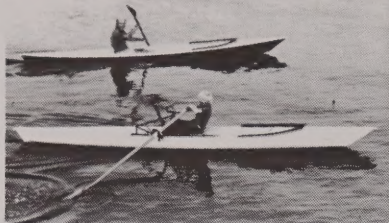
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HAPPENINGS

BLACKBURN CHALLENGE

The 20 mile open ocean Blackburn Challenge race for human powered boats takes place on July 28th at Gloucester, MA, a circumnavigation of Cape Ann, including three miles of tidal river and 17 miles of open ocean coastal going. All rowing and paddling craft suitable for open ocean use are welcomed. John Spencer, (508) 546-9022.

ADIRONDACK GOODBOAT RENDEZVOUS

Short notice, but Mason Smith, designer and builder of the Adirondack Goodboat has scheduled a rendezvous of owners of, and other persons interested in, his craft for July 28-29 at Long Lake in the Adirondacks of upstate New York. It will be a good time to try out Mason's design, and other types of small sailing/rowing craft can be brought along to join in the fun. Mason Smith, (518) 624-6398.

CANOE ORIENTEERING

Finding your way by canoe from point to point over a prescribed course using a map and compass is the objective of canoe orienteering. Upcoming on July 29th is the New England Championship on the Charles River and Norumbega Lakes in the greater Boston, Massachusetts area. Karl Stephens, (40) 245-6005.

WCHA ASSEMBLY

The Wooden Canoe Heritage Association holds its Annual Assembly August 2-6 at St. Joseph's College on Sebago Lake in N. Windham, ME. A great gathering for anyone who loves traditional canoes. Information from Tom MacKenzie, (608) 231-2192.

ATLANTIC COAST SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM

L.L. Bean sponsors its 9th Annual Atlantic Coast Sea Kayaking Symposium at Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, Maine, August 3-5 for all levels of sea kayak enthusiast. Included is a large trade display of kayaks for tryouts. L.L. Bean Public Clinics, L.L. Bean Retail Store, Freeport, ME 04033, toll free (800) 341-4341 ext. 7800.

ANTIQUE BOAT SHOW & AUCTION

The Shipyard Museum at Clayton, NY, at the Thousand Islands on the St. Lawrence River, has its 26th Annual Antique Boat Show scheduled for August 4-5, with a nautical auction on the 4th. This is the major such show of the season in the northeast. Shipyard Museum, (315) 686-4104.

BANK OF BOSTON ROWING CHALLENGE

All classes of sliding and fixed seat rowing craft are invited to participate in the Bank of Boston Rowing Challenge from the Charles River Esplanade in downtown Boston, Massachusetts on August 5. Charles River Regatta Trust, c/o Broude & Hochberg, 75 Federal St., Boston, MA 02110.

MAGNUM OPUS CRUISE

Owners of Dovekies and Shearwaters (and other shallow draft small cruising sailboats) are invited to join Peter Duff on his annual "Magnum Opus" cruise, this year along the Maine Island Trail. Dates are August 5-18, you can go the distance or join in only in part. Information from Peter Duff, (508) 758-4991.

CROPC OUTING

The Connecticut River Oar & Paddle Club will run a Windsor Locks to Middletown cruise on the Connecticut River on August 11-12, open to any interested human powered boat enthusiasts. (203) 388-9740 or (203) 388-2343.

CHESAPEAKE ROPE SPLICING

The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, MD, has a workshop on rope splicing scheduled for August 14. Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, (301) 745-2916.

FANCY ROPEWORK AT SOUTH STREET

South Street Seaport in New York City will host a Ropework and Rigging Festival, August 16-18, with fancy ropework artists and master riggers displaying their skills. Jill Sommer, (212) 669-9430.

SHIPYARD MUSEUM BOATBUILDING COURSE

A 10 day course in building a Nova Scotia dinghy is scheduled for August 18-26 at the Shipyard Museum in Clayton, NY, fee \$250. Shipyard Museum, (315) 686-4104.

RICA SEA KAYAKING

The Rhode Island Canoe Association has a sea kayaking outing scheduled for August 19 on Greenwich Bay and Green's River on Narragansett Bay. Bob Fitzpatrick, (401) 884-3723.

SHORT SHIPS RACE

Bill Gribbel will hold his annual Short Ships Race in Rockport, Maine, on August 26th, featuring a short 1-1/2 mile event in Rockport harbor and an 8 mile coastal race to Camden and back. Skippers meeting at 8 a.m. Bill Gribbel, (207) 236-3241.

ANTIQUE & CLASSIC BOAT SHOWS

Five antique and classic boat shows are scheduled for August as follows:

August 1-5. Shipyard Museum Show, Clayton, NY. (315) 686-4104.
August 11-12. Manotick A.C.B.S., Ottawa, Ontario. David Schofield, (613) 692-4707.

August 11-13. Niagara A.C.B.S., Tonawanda, NY. Zeke Zeiss, (716) 695-1989.

August 17-18. Hudson River A.C.B.S. Kingston, NY. Walt Weber, (201) 327-5000 wkdys or (914) 687-9114 wknds.

August 25. Adirondack A.C.B.S., Lake George, NY. Cookie Melrose, (516) 549-1713 or (518) 585-6472.

MAINE MARITIME MUSEUM

Special events scheduled at the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath for August are as follows:

August 8. Lighthouse Keepers' Tales & Trials, lecture.

August 12. Safety at Sea, seminar.

August 18-19. Antique Boat Regatta & Exhibition.

August 21. MV "Pauline" restored sardine carrier arrives at the Museum dock.

Regular demonstrations on selected days weekly include lofting, caulking, sailing on the river, sawmill operation, points of sail, engine operation and hull stability.

Maine Maritime Museum, (207) 443-1316.

WOODEN BOAT SCHOOL

Courses scheduled for August at the Wooden Boat School in Brooklin, ME, are as follows:

August 5-11. Fundamentals of Boatbuilding with Warren Barker. Instant Boats with Dynamite Payson. Elements of Seamanship with John Blatchford. Craft of Sail on "Jenny Ives" with Roger Taylor.

August 12-18. Fundamentals of Boatbuilding with Warren Barker. Building the Nutshell Pram Kit with Rich Hilsinger. Basic Woodworking with Tim Allen. Boat Design with Mike O'Brien. Cruising Boat Seamanship with Len Hornick.

August 19-25. Building Your Own DK-14 Kayak with Rich Hilsinger. Joinerwork with Tim Allen. Elements of Seamanship with John Blatchford. Cruising Boat Seamanship with Len Hornick.

August 19-September 1. Runabout Repair and Restoration with Don Benjamin.

August 26-September 1. Building Construction Models with Rob Wadleigh. Marine Photography with Kip Brundage.

August 26-September 8. Fundamentals of Boatbuilding with Greg Rossel.

Wooden Boat School, (207) 359-4651

WOODEN BOATBUILDING CLASSES

The Brookfield Craft Center in Brookfield, CT, has several summer boatbuilding courses scheduled:

August 6-10. Norwegian Pram with David Foster.

August 20-25. Adirondack Guideboat with Steve Kaulback.

Information, (203) 775-4526.

CLASSIC WOODEN CANOE BUILDING

For upper midwestern readers (there are some now) a two-week workshop on building a classic wood/canvas canoe will be held at the Stewart River Boatworks in Two Harbors, Minnesota, taught by Alex Comb. This is a University of Minnesota Duluth Outdoor Program, fee is \$500. (218) 726-7170.

RC MODEL BOATING

Radio controlled model boat events during August are as follows:

August 12. Club Handicap Race for EC12's, Roger Williams Park, Providence, RI. Charly Silvia, (401) 847-6310.

August 19. New England Scale Ship Regatta, Rocky Woods, Medfield, MA. Tom Turchon, (508) 376-8614.

August 26. Club Handicap Race for EC12's, Roger Williams Park, Providence, RI. Charly Silvia, (401) 847-6310

Interested persons can find model yacht sailing going on weekly at the following locations:

Sail racing Tuesday evenings at 6 p.m. at Rosemary Lake in Needham, MA.

Operating scale models Sundays at 11 a.m. at Rocky Woods in Medfield, MA.

Sail racing Sundays at 9:30 a.m. at Roger Williams Park in Providence, RI.

Sail racing Sundays at 10 a.m. at Redd's Pond in Marblehead, MA.

Sail racing Sundays at 10 a.m. at Loon Pond in Springfield, MA.

CAPE COD VIKING ROWING

The Cape Cod Vikings Ocean Dory Rowing Club has the following outings planned for August, open to anyone with oar-on-gunwale pulling boats:

August 11. Duxbury Bay.

August 25. Lewis Bay & Great Island.

Mike Orbe, (508) 420-5487 or Jon Aborn, (508) 759-9786.

KAYAKING/SAILING CRUISES

The Maine coast charter yacht "Jessamyn Rose" has two August cruises of three days each scheduled for sea kayakers who wish to combine access to remoter locations on the Maine coast for paddling with sailing to get there. Dates are August 17-20 and August 24-27. Capt. Stephen Olson, (207) 338-4652.

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L.L. BEAN PADDLING CLINICS

L.L. Bean's Public Clinics will run the following two-hour clinics for aspiring paddlers during August on the Royal River at Yarmouth, ME:

August 11, 18, 25. Coastal Kayak Paddling.

August 12, 19, 26. Classic Paddling Strokes for Solo or Tandem Canoes.

L.L. Bean, toll free (800) 341-4341 ext. 7800.

MCKC COURSES

The Metropolitan Canoe & Kayak Club of Brooklyn, NY, offers the following courses to interested persons:

August 8, 11-12. Fundamentals of River Kayaking, fee \$85.

August 18, 25-26. Fundamentals of Canoeing, fee \$85.

Al Musial, (718) 763-3269 eves. before 9 p.m.

MCKC OUTINGS

The Metropolitan Canoe & Kayak Club of Brooklyn, NY, has the following outings scheduled for August, open to any interested persons:

August 5. Around Manhattan Trip from Liberty State Park. Henry Espinoza, (201) 232-2230 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. only.

August 10-14. Five Day Camp-out at Watch Hill. Al Musial, (212) 313-2064.

August 18. Delaware River-Mongaup, Class II. (212) 228-7793.

August 31-September 3. Labor Day Weekend at Parvin State Park. (212) 228-7793.

SUMMER SEA KAYAK OUTINGS

Adventure Learning of Merri-mac, MA, has several summer kayak outings suitable for beginners scheduled on the Massachusetts north shore this summer:

August 3. Full moon paddle over Joppa Flats near Newburyport, MA.

August 11. Day trip from Rockport, MA, to Thacher's Island and the Salvages.

August 17. Sunset paddle in Newburyport harbor.

August 18. Day trip to Great Bay in southern New Hampshire.

If you've never kayaked and want to see if it appeals to you, these outings offer inexpensive examples. Information, (508) 346-9728.

SEBAGO CANOE CLUB

The Sebago Canoe Club of Brooklyn, NY, has the following outings scheduled for August:

August 12. War canoe cruise with the Prospect Park Environmental Center.

August 12. Hell Gate Hop, sea kayak the East River, 15 mile one-way trip. Steve Keller, (718) 788-3416.

BAER'S RIVER WORKSHOPS

Baer's River Workshop of Exeter, RI, has the following on-the-water workshops scheduled for August:

August 11. Introduction to Open Water Kayaking.

August 12 & 26. Introduction to River Kayaking.

August 18. Canoeing I.

Baer's River Workshop, (401) 295-0855.

NEW YORK CITY KAYAKING PROGRAMS

Atlantic Kayak Tours of Saugerties, NY, offers instruction in sea kayaking and day or weekend tours, crossings and circumnavigations in the greater New York City area throughout the summer and fall. August events are as follows:

August 10 & 25. Basic Sea Kayaking.

August 11. Intermediate Surfing.

August 12. New York Harbor Beginner Tour.

August 16. Staten Island to Sandy Hook Crossing.

August 18. Bridgeport to Port Jefferson Crossing.

August 29. Tivoli Bays on the Hudson Tour.

Atlantic Kayak Tours, (914) 246-2187.

NISSEQUOGUE RIVER CANOEING

Outings offered by the Nisse-quogue River Canoe Club of Kings Park, NY, in August are as follows:

August 6-10. Oswagatchi River, Adirondacks, NY, Class 1. Day trips from campground. George Jones, (516) 265-1773.

August 11-12. Indian River, Adirondacks, NY, Class 1. Day trips from campground. George Jones, (516) 265-1773.

August 11-12. Delaware Water Gap, Moving Water Course. Joe Spahalski, (516) 587-5468 eves.

August 25-28. Whitewater rafting, Kennebec River, ME. Don Feltham, (516) 427-5535 eves.

CCRA CANOEING

The Connecticut Canoe Racing Club has two outings scheduled for August:

August 4. Bluefish Cruise, ten miles on the Hammonasset River, Clinton, CT. Dan Pelletier, (203) 237-2474.

August 15. Sunset Canoe Race, 5-1/2 mile flatwater, Middle Bolton Lakes, Bolton, CT. Ted Kenyon, (203) 872-0219.

TUGBOAT MUSTER

Play day for Boston harbor tugs and any interested visiting tugboats is on August 25 this year, headquartered at the World Trade Center (Commonwealth Pier) off Summer St. in South Boston. Dick Chase, (617) 924-3209.

It's a boat... a backpack... a tent!

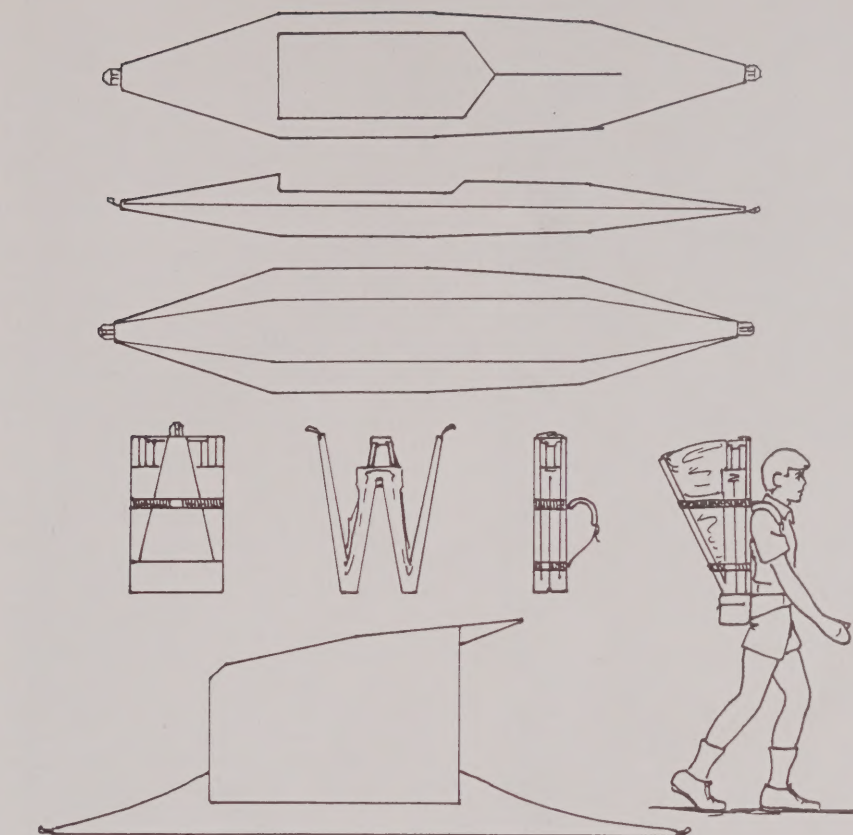
Report & Photos by Bob Hicks



When Jim Heter arrived at my place to pick me up for our tryout of his unique "Pak-Yak" folding kayak/backpack/tent, the two test boats were in the back of his station wagon, in their backpack mode. Really backpacks, complete with standard back pack harnesses, ready to be carried off down the trail. I had pondered a while over a suitable local location where we could try out the various permutations of Jim's creation, a body of water one has to walk into is not readily at hand in our heavily suburbanized area. But, Crane Pond in Groveland, about ten miles away, met most of the criteria. Its a sizeable pond in a state fish and game area, surrounded by woods and marshes and drained by the upper Parker River. There's a rough two-track jeep road into it, usually barred by a cable though.

We parked at roadside by the jeep road entrance, noting the absence of any cable. The 25 pound backpack hefted easily into place, and once settled onto my back it felt like it belonged. I'm not a backpacker, but Jim is, and he had adapted a standard backpack configuration to his creation. He hikes miles with his to remote waters in more wild parts of the country. The half-mile hike into Crane Pond was no strain, when we got there, illusion of hiking back "into the woods" was partly dispelled by a 4WD pickup that had been driven in by two young fishermen.

Jim proceeded to open up the packs after we laid them on the



ground. Two folded up sections opened out into bow and stern profiles viewed from above, still flat but obviously of boat shape. Then Jim reached inside the flat hulls and moved various internal structures into positions where they latched to give the hull its full three-dimensional form. In about five minutes we now had two ten foot fabric hulled kayaks. No pieces had to be fitted into the craft, all structural parts were already in place.

Final equipping with seat cushions (carried in the packs) and assembling the take-apart Sevlor inflatable double paddles (carried in the packs) readied us for the water. There was a mild breeze rippling the pond. I took some care shoving off to not drag the fabric hull on the gravel beach. This was accomplished by placing my hands, knuckles down, on the ground in the shallow water and lifting the boat along until it settled finally only onto water, no more bottom gravel.

My initial feeling was one of mild discomfort as I sat in the mid-point of the craft and cockpit as Jim suggested. No back support. I'm not comfortable without back support. So I turned back to shore to maneuver the other flotation cushion carried behind me into a good backrest position, and shifted my weight aft until I was comfortable. Much better. Only now the little craft was down at the stern. I'm 6' and weigh 175 pounds, Jim is 5'8" and weighs about 140 pounds, and

the trim of my boat now reflected my size and choice of seating position. But, this rearward bias of weight did not create a problem in paddling and I felt quite secure. The little boat was very stable.

We paddled around the pond and off down the Parker River for about a mile of its switchback turns in the large marsh bordering the pond. It was "Earth Day" Sunday and lo, here came into view a rather plump looking double kayak. Turned out to be an inflatable. The couple on board viewed our little craft, also portable, but the guy mentioned that his inflatable was "blown up for the season." They'd not be deflating it until fall, but would car top it. Later a canoe also came upstream, access from roadside on the upper Parker is about two miles downstream from Crane Pond. The folks were gathering trash, not a whole lot was out there, but the signs of last fall's duck shooting crowd were still around. For a fine early spring Sunday, though, we had a minimum of company.

About the time I began to feel my seat getting damp, Jim commented that my position allowed water to surge over the rear deck as I paddled along and some of this was now seeping through the water-repellent nylon decking where it had actually pooled in a sag in the deck. So be it, nothing to be done about it now, and the amount of water was on the order of dampness rather than wetness. Jim has a 12' version he created for bigger folks



to deal with this weight distribution situation.

The "Pak-Yak" was very maneuverable, stable and moved easily. The soft skin allowed one to feel the flexing of the bottom moving through the water, even through the closed-cell foam bottom inner liner. The little craft felt very much a part of its surroundings.

Back to the take out, and Jim showed me how to unzip the foredeck to allow stepping forward in the boat and then ashore without wetting my feet. Neat trick. We then moved on to the tent mode. Jim undid the internal latches and collapsed the frame back to its flattish shape. He then pulled the rear frame out of the skin, still connected to the rest of the frame, and locked it up into a vertical configuration over which he then slipped his custom fitted poncho, zipping it into place for full sitting headroom, with the cockpit spray skirt (which he fitted after our paddle) opening forming a ventilation window in the back. A sleeping bag fit nicely into the flattened hull, feet up under the still extended foredeck, and here was instant overnight shelter for the wilderness hiker/kayaker!



What a rig for the backwoodsman who wants to fish or just paddle the remote ponds and lakes or streams far from the nearest road. On his back it will carry his necessary gear folded up inside itself. On the water it will carry him where he wishes to go. And on the ground, it provides him overnight shelter at no added weight penalty. So who is Jim Heter and how and why did he ever come up with this unique craft? Here's the way he tells it:

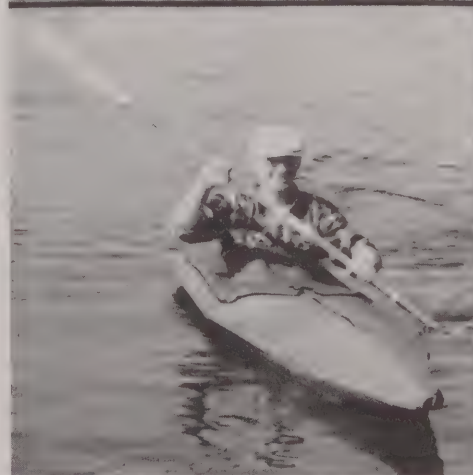
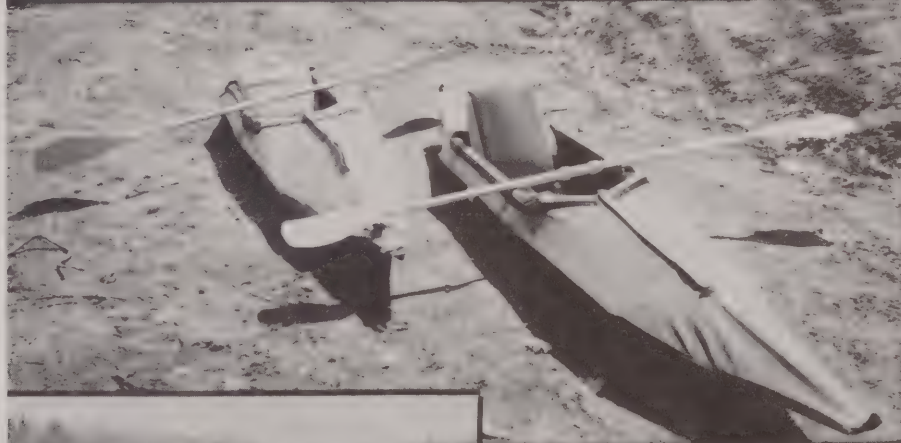
"In the Oregon Cascades a little south of Mt. Hood, below the summit of Mt. Jefferson, is an area called Jefferson Park. About ten years ago I led a group of Boy Scouts on an overnight hike there. It's about an eight-mile hike up the mountain from the end of the access road. Jeff Park is a flat open area with a string of little mountain ponds and a great view of Jefferson and the neighboring peaks.

We were using homemade shelters cut from plastic lumber tarps. I spent a good part of a cold night under one of them dreaming about what it would be like if I had my kayak with me (and a better tent). A year later, I made the same trip again. This time my pack was my "PakYak" and I fulfilled my dream of paddling around those high mountain ponds. My "PakYak" was also my tent, and I had no problem keeping warm and dry.

I built my first folding boat back in the '60's modelled (very roughly) after the original Klepper folding boats from Germany. That boat was 16' long and took me over an hour to assemble, because first I had to remember what attached to what, then I had to get the parts to cooperate. But, once set up it was great and I used it for several years.

Early in the '70's I came up with a new design to overcome the problems I had with the first one. This one was all one piece, and folded into four three-foot sections without disconnecting anything. I had a harness to carry it on my back, but it was still too heavy to think of lugging it too far. That one set up in about 15 minutes and I've had it everywhere from Cape Cod to San Francisco Bay. But not to Jefferson Park.

My latest "PakYak" 'is 10' long, weighs a little over 15 pounds empty, sets up in less than five minutes, packs all my hiking gear as well, and makes up into a one-man tent. I've made three more versions since that second Mt. Jefferson expedition. I've done eskimo rolls with it. I've had it in fast river water on the Nashua here near my home in Lancaster, Massachusetts, and through a two-foot chop on the ICW down in Florida. It survived the airline baggage handling too!



I like this design so well that I believe others will too. So I've tried an ad in "Canoe" magazine and displayed it at a recent inventor's show in Boston. Here are the specs:

The "PakYak", backpack to kayak in less than five minutes.

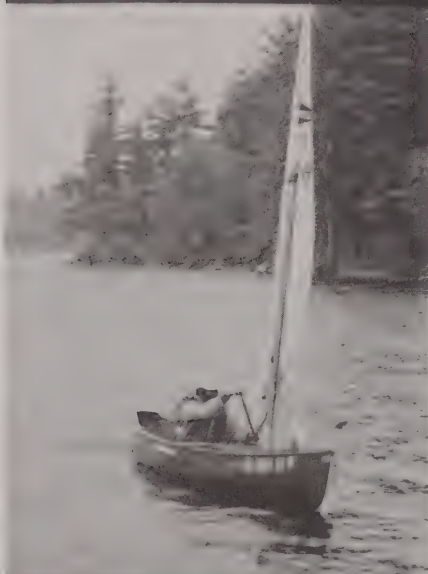
Backpack is 30" high x 20" wide x 6" deep. With paddles, sprayskirt and USCG life preserver cushion it weighs under 25 pounds. As a pack it will carry all your hiking gear.

Kayak is 10' long by 24" wide by 12" deep and will perform on rivers, streams, ponds and lakes in all but the most extreme conditions. It will carry one adult up to 200 pounds, plus 50 pounds of gear evenly distributed fore and aft.

Tent is 10' long x 24" wide x 36" high and shelters an adult comfortably from adverse weather conditions.

Construction is waterproofed nylon canvas over a wood and metal frame, with closed-cell foam bottom liner for cushioning, flotation and puncture resistance. Frame is completely removeable but in normal use folds inside the skin with no need for removal of any parts.

Interested? Full details from me, Jim Heter, P.O. Box 446, Lancaster, MA 01523, (508) 537-0995.



From the top: Jim Wait's gorgeous traditional canoe. The wind was not all it might have been for the sailors. Geoff Burke and Annie in "Annie's Boat", traditional wood lapstrake double paddle canoe Geoff built. A rare sight.

NORTH AMERICAN *Canoe* SYMPOSIUM



The canoe lends itself to a wide variety of on-the-water experience, ranging from the rental-on-the pond beginner level to heroic whitewater efforts involving running not only rapids but waterfalls and on to expeditions into the arctic barren lands. All this and more, as they say on TV, was available at L.L. Bean's North American Canoe Symposium at Bridgeton, Maine, June 8-10. Two-hundred-fifty paddlers of all sorts gathered at 80 year-old Camp Winona for a comprehensive program of instruction and entertainment. Bean spares no effort to obtain the leading lights espousing all the many permutations of paddling canoes.

For the most part the emphasis is on the single paddle open canoe, known in the rest of the world as the Canadian canoe, a design pretty much based on the aboriginal American Indian craft. Very little was to be seen or heard about the double paddle canoe, usually decked, of European origin. About the only sort of waters not considered suitable for this "traditional" canoe are the oceans, the canoe is not an oceangoing craft, vulnerable to waves and winds with its high sides and open gunwales.

The single paddle propulsion (with sometimes auxiliary support from the pole, especially upstream) seems to require the mastery of a bewildering array of paddle strokes in order to direct the canoe where one wants it to go, or to deal with challenging water conditions. Those in the know relish this arcane art of maneuvering the paddle through intricate patterns to achieve the desired results. Many of the workshops focussed on paddling techniques, for solo or double; for transportation of persons and baggage, or for performing fancy "free style" maneuvers for their own sake.

Folks like the Conovers, who take people on extended wilderness trips in traditional northwoods canoes of wood and canvas, demonstrate the long flat-bladed paddles built by Alexandra for propelling a heavily loaded canoe all day long, day after day. At the other extreme, Mike Gault, proponent of

"free style" paddling, who says he wants to bring canoeing "out of the woods", demonstrates his short wide bent shaft paddles used to draw his highly maneuverable canoes into elaborate patterns of movement, much like a figure skater. Harry Roberts presents something called "American Touring Technique", yet another method of paddling aimed at going somewhere. Obviously there's more to this than one might suspect.

This is why Mike Perry, who runs L.L. Bean's public clinic programs, has so assiduously promoted this event. Canoes are integrally involved in Bean's marketing, the craft of choice for many who head for the woods with a boat over their shoulders. The tradition is a long and sustained one. The original purpose of transportation still survives, but now all sorts of challenges once avoided by "voyageurs" intent on getting furs to market are now sought out and the techniques for canoeing these challenges have become highly refined.

The white water troops were all agog over the just happened attempt by some white water type to run Niagara Falls as the "ultimate whitewater". Despite apparent plans for a celebratory dinner after going over the falls, this particular leading edge fellow failed and his body was not found; the canoe was, folded in two. At Bridgeton, whitewater was undertaken some 30 miles away on the Saco River. But the special canoes with severe rocker and full to the gunwales with inflatable bags except where the "saddle" for the paddler was fitted, were on display at Winona. And you could attend some educational workshops on the subject, even one entitled, "Learning to talk whitewater". Like understanding what these guys are saying.

People who thought they'd like to try poling had Harry Rock to show them this game. For him, it is a game, he's an athlete, highly skilled in this little known sport. His instruction is almost an exhibition and an entertainment, as he changes direction by jumping into the air from his standing position amidships in his canoe and turning

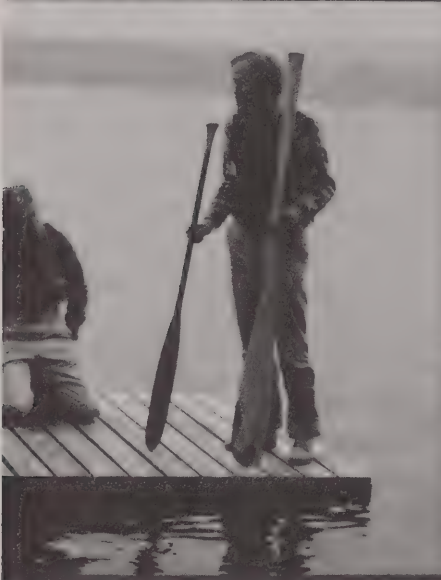
180 degrees before thumping back down into place. He "paddles" also with his pole when the water is too deep, the small diameter pole seems to get some grip on the water as he sort of windmills along. Harry has won something like 75 straight poling championships, which may say more about the available interested competition than it does about his skills.

If you wanted to go canoe camping you could have it two ways. The traditional way with lots of gear in a big solid "freight" canoe such as the Conovers use, or with all the latest techy ultra-light gear in an ultra light kevlar design, espoused by Tom and Sue Sebring. The latter caution you to not ground out your boat, but step out of it while it still floats. Careful.

The ultimate canoe camping is the expedition to the arctic. Several different presentations on this were offered, it fascinates people. Alan Kesselheim and Marypat Zitter showed slides of a dozen years of their roaming the arctic wilds of Canada by canoe, and spending up to 18 months away, wintering over in trappers' cabins on lonely lakes. They admit to many frustrations and aggravations, along with outright fear, in pursuing this recreation and have written a really good book on one long trip, "Water and Sky: Reflections on a Northern Year", great reading BEFORE you head north. Another presentation is that of the Peake brothers, who seem to hide real expertise in wilderness travel and survival behind a sort of Marx Brothers act. And Cliff Jacobson, a widely respected outdoor adventurer and writer, who comes across in person at first as sort of a country boy, has enormous experience in this game. He was the one who discussed how much it costs to get yourself and your canoe flown into your chosen point of departure from the end of the road. Guess how much. Try \$5 a mile, from \$4,000 to \$6,000 for a drop off here and pickup there. Alan and Marypat started from the end of the road and did 18 months on just about \$5,000 all in. So there are ways and there are ways...

Right from the top: First you learn how to move the paddle. Instruction on "freestyle" technique involves deliberate leaning of the canoe, first in the wading pool, then out on the pond. Too much lean. The tryout beach, a variety of canoes to experience.





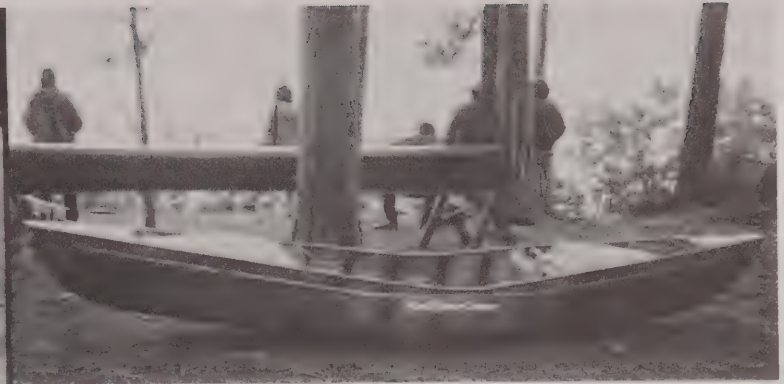
Well, back to the pond, and here's more. How about sailing? Jim Bowman had three sailing canoes for his workshops, which drew smallish groups. Sailing a canoe seems to be something of an abandonment of the true spirit of the paddler, and seemed to be regarded with some distance by many. Sport paddling, Charlie Wilson in a slippery little canoe showed those interested how to really maneuver that boat in any direction, mostly by leaning it way over to radically change the submerged hull shape into a slippery sort of egg form. People kneeling offside in canoes tipping to one side were commonplace on the waterfront, occasionally the lean got too extreme, and...

Well, to get on the water one needs to choose a boat, so you could learn about that too. Tricky area here, as various proponents of canoe styles have strongly held opinions of what is a proper boat, often with some background commercial connections. And you could learn how to build your own if that pleased you, or fix up the one you bought, or build a paddle of your own cheaply. And getting to water, cartopping techniques, even knots to use. There was nothing left out if you had the time. Nothing.

Overloaded circuits could be reset at mealtimes, lord what food, they surely do know how to feed you right at Winona. In that funky old time camp dining hall, all you wanted of hearty outdoor food. And a Saturday night barbeque. Maybe this was supposed to be learning about canoeing but it was also meant to be a good time. And it was. A survey Friday evening by Mike Perry at the evening gathering found several veterans of all five Symposiums to date. They don't come back to learn any more, but to just be there taking it all in. Novice to expert, it was an enthusiastic group of small boat nuts who happen to favor that unique, versatile craft, the canoe. An enduring love affair it would seem.

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

Left from top: The Conovers commence instruction in "Northwoods Paddle Technique". Garret displays the Northwoods paddles, those are kneepads around his ankles, you kneel a lot in canoes. Alexandra demonstrates dockside stroke. Harry Rock paddling with his pole. Tom and Sue Sebring espouse ultra-light hi-tech canoe camping.



The "craft" at left was parked outside the dining hall door, one of the kitchen help had it in the water we were told. The "craft" at right is a whitewater boat, no it's not broken-backed, but is built that way for maneuverability. Talk about rocker!

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Harry discusses the exciting possibilities of paddling a canoe; Solo, Tandem, Poling, Sailing, Freestyle, White Water, American Touring Technique, and Northwoods.

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A technical discussion of trimming your canoe for efficiency, control, and safety.

Learning to Talk White Water

Getting started can be tough if you don't know the language! Cathy covers common terms and expressions used by white water paddlers, and their application.

PADDLING STYLES: Northwoods Tandem Demo

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Organizing an expedition requires long-term planning for selecting proper gear, efficient packing, and dry storage.

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Cooking tips for fun and enjoyable meals on the river. Including setting up an efficient camp kitchen.

Alan Kesselhelm & Marypat Zitzer

Cliff Jacobson

Mike Perry

Geoff Burke

Ken Stone

Harry Rock

Rob Center

Harry Roberts

John Winters

Cathy Pliffath

Alexandra & Garrett Conover

Jim Bowman

Tom Sebring

Sandy Martin

Don Otey

Lou Glaros & Charlie Wilson

Simon Dixon

The Peake Brothers

Cliff Jacobson

Alan Kesselhelm & Marypat Zitzer

Bart Hauthaway

Alexandra & Garrett Conover

The Peake Brothers

Dwight Lander

Alan Kesselhelm & Marypat Zitzer

PADDLING STYLES:

American Touring Technique Solo Demo

Freestyle Ballet Demo

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Common problems facing the paddler: Sprains, strains and fractures.

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Strategies for paddling in wind and waves.

Rescue Ropes

Mechanical aids for outmuscling Mother Nature. Gear needs, set up, and techniques.

PADDLING STYLES: Sport Paddling Tandem Demo

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18 days exploring the deserts and canyons of the Texas/Mexico border.

Medical Considerations Pt.2

Environmental problems facing the paddler: Hypothermia, hyperthermia, and dehydration.

Maintaining the Bomb Proof Canoe

Repairs and maintenance tips for plastic boats.

Camping Tips

A variety of simple tips and tricks to make canoe camping easier.

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THE ISLAND TRAIL

SPRING 1990

NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE ISLAND TRAIL ASSOCIATION



*A view of cove at Butter Island
(Photo by Dave Getchell, Sr.)*

Pond, Butter, and Russ Islands Added to Trail

Three Penobscot Islands Total More than 350 Acres

Three exceptional privately owned islands will be open to members of the Maine Island Trail Association this year. Located in East Penobscot Bay, the three include 50-acre Russ Island off Stonington, 35-acre Pond Island at the western end of Eggemoggin Reach, and 270-acre Butter Island, which lies three-and-a-half miles south of Pond. On these new islands the MITA philosophy of "user management" will be presented with its roughest test.

Russ Island was purchased by the Island Institute last year (with many MITA members helping pay for it!). Less than a mile from the busy working harbor of Stonington, on the south side of the Deer Isle Thorofare, this beautiful wild island is graced with several small hills, rolling meadows, spruce copses, and one of the finest island views on the Maine coast. The island will be open to the public for day use, but camping will be limited to MITA and Island Institute

members to assure that only low-impact methods will be used.

Pond Island, owned by The Philadelphia Conservationists, will be leased to MITA for access management. An unusual island for Maine, Pond features long sand and gravel beaches, a shallow salt water pond, a fine spruce forest, and a hillside meadow with vistas of sea and mountain.

Pond has a long history of recreational use. In fact, it was purchased for this purpose from private owners several years ago by nearby residents and summer people, then placed under a conservation easement to assure its preservation and access. With increasing use, the owners recognized the need for some management and have leased the island to MITA to carry this out.

Under our plan, day use will continue to be open to all, but, as with Russ, camping will be limited to MITA and a few other traditional users. The camping area will be

located at the western end of the island, well away from the more popular beaches.

Beautiful Butter Island is owned by the Cabot family, which generously shares it with the boating public. A large, wild island today, it once was the location of a large summer resort serviced by steamboat. Much of the island grew back to forest, but last year the Cabots reopened two of the former meadows and pastured 14 sheep there to help preserve the open space. Part of the service MITA will provide the owners will be gathering and burning downed brush in one of the meadows. This project will be carried out with the help of Hurricane Outward Bound School on April 28-29 (see story on page 3).

Camping has always been restricted on Butter, with permission given to Outward Bound, the Chewonki Foundation, and Robin Hood camp. These organizations will

continue to use the island, but MITA will now be added to the list. Because the Cabots want to reduce unauthorized overnighting, camping will be restricted to specific sites for each group. MITA will have two excellent areas on the west side. Details for the use of these will be given in the Annual Supplement, out in May.

Access to these large islands, each

remarkably different from the others, offers exciting new opportunities to MITA members, but the importance of following the few rules specific to each island can be seen. As always, low-impact use, a respect for other visitors, and a willingness to help care for the island, are critical to having the special privileges accorded to the Association.

—David R. Getchell, Sr.

LETTER FROM THE TRAIL DIRECTOR

We've Just Begun: Goals for 1990

In a newsletter editorial last winter I said that 1989 would be a year of testing, that "the Maine Island Trail Association will be judged on what it does and does not do." Going into our third year of operation, it's safe to say we are doing well on the test. The Maine Island Trail is becoming an accepted part of the coastal scene, and MITA is increasingly recognized as the moving force behind it.

But the task of building respect and acceptance is far from complete. Some of the most important people out there still don't know who we are or where we are going. But we're gaining.

At the start of each season, we make a list of things we hope to accomplish, then tally the results come fall. Our 1989 goals were to extend the Island Trail to Machias, add several more state islands to the Trail, seek permission to use additional private islands, add some side trips to the Trail, and continue to recruit new adherents to our low-impact philosophy. All of these goals were met, including our first major side trip, a spectacular loop in New Brunswick that will be described in the 1990 Annual Supplement. As for membership, we ended the year with 1,500 members, up from approximately 500 at the close of 1988.

These are rather modest accomplishments compared with what might be done if we were to conduct a major membership campaign, especially one aimed at boosting Maine numbers. However, gradual growth has been our stated goal from the beginning, so we depend on word-of-mouth and a few stories in a variety of publications for recruitment. This brings us people who are directly interested in our low-impact ideas, many of whom are also eager to participate in helping with island care and maintenance. The result is a membership that can be trusted to do what we promise to do, an approach that will begin to pay off in spades — and islands — this year.

This issue's cover story is about Pond, Russ, and Butter islands, three outstanding

islands in Penobscot Bay open to MITA this year. While the ownership of the trio differs, the challenges they present are similar. Among the problems is an increase in unauthorized use. MITA will be taking on a new responsibility with these three new islands: management of access and use. This is a major step in our growth, and our success in this will unquestionably bring requests for help from other private island owners.

The growing number of private islands coming into the Trail system also increases our obligation to help the owners care for their islands. In most cases, they want their lands to remain wild and untouched. Our main responsibility is to use the islands without impact and to urge others to do the same. However, owners are encouraged to request MITA's help in outdoor projects such as trail clearing, brush cutting and burning, and similar work that could benefit from extra hands. The importance of strong


participation in these projects cannot be overemphasized. In addition, both private and public islands will gain from our new "adopt-an-island" policy, in which members may sign on as stewards of individual islands.

Such work will continue to build a solid and conservative reputation for MITA. This is the key to winning the trust of other island owners. But even more difficult will be the job of gaining the respect, or even acceptance, of professional mariners such as commercial fishermen and the coastal marine industry. It is important to keep in mind that we are literally playing on their working grounds — at least in their eyes — and interference with their work through ignorance or ineptness does little to advance our cause.

Persons in small boats are in much the same class as bicyclists in traffic: hard to see and frequently ignored. Safety lies in defensive driving, whether you are on a Schwinn or in a sea kayak. Also, the more we can learn about fishing methods and how the boats are operated, the better able we will be to stay out of their way. To this end, a regular feature of these newsletters will be descriptions of various fisheries.

In wrapping up, if 1989 was the year of testing, 1990 is going to be the year of work for the Maine Island Trail Association. But as I have said before, it's not so much physical labor as a grand excuse to get out to the Maine islands. We hope to see you there.

—David R. Getchell, Sr.
Trail Director



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The MITA is maturing rapidly, and is moving toward accomplishing its original goals at a rate beyond all of our expectations. Most of this success is due directly to the enthusiastic support of its members, and to continue the work of preserving the wild islands of Maine and gaining new access in a responsible manner MITA needs your help, both financially and physically. Money and work are the linchpins of any successful support group, but in our case they lead to impressive rewards.

Kayak Courtesy ♦ Reducing Impact on Coastal Culture

The low-impact use philosophy endorsed by MITA involves more than just preserving island ecology. It also involves reducing impact on the traditional culture and uses of the Maine coast.

The seas may seem vast along Maine's hundreds of miles of coastline, but kayakers and lobstermen frequently end up cheek by jowl in inlets and secluded coves. In summer, lobstermen tend traps in waters often just yards from shore because that's where lobsters migrate during the warmer months. Kayakers also seem to prefer being close in, where views are more interesting and vulnerability to changing ocean conditions is reduced.



This overlap of preferred habitats creates a clear potential for conflict. Kayakers can inadvertently get in the way of the lobstermen, forcing them to take evasive action or miss their buoys when going from one trap line to the next. And lobstermen can unthinkingly leave nasty wakes that could turtle even high volume kayakers. Tempers can get frayed.

To date, little animosity has cropped up between kayakers and lobstermen. Ed Blackmore, a veteran lobsterman based in Stonington, says he's seen a lot more kayakers in the area over the past two or three years, but doesn't have any complaints and says he hasn't heard of any conflicts between the two groups.

Greg Griffin, a lobsterman who works out of congested Portland harbor, says he hasn't heard any complaints either. He says, "the general attitude among lobstermen is that kayakers must be a little loony," but they don't cause many problems. He notes that lobstermen are also more likely to take a benign view of kayakers because they

aren't potential trap poachers, as are other recreational boat owners. "As suspicious as lobstermen are, especially on foggy days, they know a kayaker would sink himself if he tried to pull up a trap," Griffin says.

As is often the case when two cultures first mingle, each group initially regards the other with a mix of curiosity and amusement. But the novelty is likely to wear off with time as increasing numbers of kayakers take to the coast. Despite this, as long as kayakers understand the concerns of the lobstermen, and vice-versa, no conflicts need ever arise.

Ed Blackmore says the potential for conflict occurs even before kayakers get on the water. Even though kayaks are relatively small craft, he's noticed that kayak groups tend to occupy an inordinate amount of space at public docks and landings while they're preparing to launch. "They can tie up the whole dock," he says, preventing a lobsterman from landing his gear. He also urges kayakers to use the shallow end of the dock when possible, since many lobster boats can dock only at the deeper end. He notes that just by being aware that dock space

and time are valuable commodities, kayakers can help lobstermen function more efficiently.

Blackmore also says that before kayakers set out they should also be prepared to handle most emergencies without relying on local fishermen to bail them out if they get in trouble. Blackmore reports that local lobstermen had to rescue some kayakers last summer. They're more than willing to help in dire cases, but "it's not something they want to do on a regular basis," he says. "Kayakers have got to have a little respect for the ocean."

Out on the water, it's always prudent to give a lobsterman a wide berth when paddling by. When a number of lobster boats are working the ledges, that's not always possible. "In high traffic areas, you're bound to get in someone's way," says Tom Roeber, head of MITA's Casco Bay Section.

The main potential for collisions comes from carelessness on the part of one craft or the other. Griffin says that kayakers sometimes get "so engrossed in the view that they

become a little bit careless." And lobstermen will admit that they often become so wrapped up in their routine that they don't notice low-slung kayaks before accelerating on to their next set of traps.

Ed Friedman of Dragonworks says that it's best to assume that lobster boats don't notice kayakers. The most vulnerable time comes when crossing the bow of a lobster boat carving a slow arc as the lobsterman hauls traps in the stern. When the pilot returns to the wheelhouse, he quickly accelerates after a glance around. Not being accustomed to look for ultra-small craft, he may easily overlook kayakers.

Griffin suggests that kayakers observe lobstermen and learn their habits. "Watch and see what they're doing," he says. "Most of the work is repetitive. If they're pulling pairs, they do a lot of loop-to-loops. You can anticipate what their destination is."

For the most part, kayakers are advised to waive their right-of-way when approaching a lobster boat. Roeber suggests that kayakers defer to traditional coastal uses and not worry so much about the rules of the road. For one, kayaks are more maneuverable than lobster boats. "Even if you have the legal right, it's best not to push it," he says.

Perhaps the worst attitude, which few kayakers seem to adopt, is the "these-are-public-waters-and-I-can-go-where-I-damn-well-please" approach, enforcing the exact letter of the law. These kayakers may be right in the eyes of the judge, but MITA encourages its members not to overlook the value of tradition and the hard work it takes to make a living from the sea. And there's also the might-vs.-right issue. As bicyclists sharing roads with automobiles well know, a collision renders moot most theoretical arguments over rights, at least for the occupant of the smaller craft.

Griffin anticipates a generally amicable relationship between kayaks and lobstermen in the future. He says he has far more complaints about other recreational boaters, such as the owners of oversized powerboats that fly by and kick up wakes that upset the lobster tanks.

And then there are the problematic windsurfers. "Kayakers are OK," he says. "It's the windsurfers who terrify me. Those people have got to be brain dead."

— Wayne Curtis

Down the Maine Island Trail in 1880

FROM ANDOVER, MASS., TO BAR HARBOR, ME., IN AUG., 1880.

BY G. W. W. DOVE.

THE shadow-canoe is a small cedar lap-streak keel boat, thirteen feet long by two and one-half beam, and of about sixty pounds weight; decked over, except where the operator sits, and is propelled by a double paddle, or sails. In the bow and stern are water-tight compartments of about two cubic feet each in capacity, which render the canoe very buoyant and safe in rough water. It is yawl-rigged, and sails very well before the wind. The steering is done by means of lines leading from the yoke on the rudder to a cross-bar on a post stepped under the deck within easy reach of the feet of the operator, who sits in the bottom of the canoe.

On the trip in question some supplies were taken, such as water, pilot-bread, etc., and a good-sized portmanteau carried the necessary clothing. All these were comfortably stowed away, fore and aft, leaving the middle free for the passenger. The portable masts and sails and an extra paddle were stowed on each side of him, also a dipper, sponge, fog-horn, compass, chart, etc., conveniently near. The journey was begun on Monday morning, the 9th of August, by two gentlemen, the writer and Wm. R. Robeson, of Boston, each in his own canoe, with everything carefully stored and made fast, so that, in case of an unlucky upset, nothing would be lost. The start was made at 9 o'clock, from below the dam at Frye Village, Andover, Mass., on the Shawshin River, a tributary of the Merrimac.

Paddled leisurely down until 10:15, when we reached the Merrimac a mile or so below Lawrence. Rubbed pretty hard over the shallow places and rapids, running one, on which we came nearer being capsized than at any other time during the trip. The run down the Merrimac was very pleasant, with the exception of two very lively rapids, where it was rather exciting. At the principal one, a mile or two above Haverhill, government dredges were at work deepening the water, and we were very nearly nipped out of our boats by the chin, as we shot under one of the mooring cables stretched across within two feet of the rushing water. We felt all the more thankful for our escape when we saw some poor fellows drying their clothes, just below the rapids, having been capsized as they attempted to run them. They had lost everything that the boats contained, including some valuable guns. Reached Haverhill at noon, when, feeling a slight breeze behind us, we spread our "dandies" (a little leg-of-mutton sail just astern of the paddler). Soon after, the breeze freshened, when we landed, stepped our masts and hoisted our mainsails and jibs, though the latter were never of much use. The mainsail is of the "lug" pattern, of about thirty cubic feet area, and is quite effective in a good breeze anywhere from abaft the beam. Lunched on board while sailing down the river. At 4:15 we reached Newburyport. Landed just above the city, stowed our sails and took a swim; then paddled down, hauled our canoes out and housed them, and resorted to the Merrimac House for the night.

Tuesday, 10th. Were off again at 9, A. M., and in an hour were out of the river and on the salt water. Passed Salisbury Beach at 10, and the Boar's Heads at 11:30.

Paddled on over a gentle swell until 12:30, when we came to Rye Beach, where we landed for dinner and a rest, as three hours of steady work was a little trying to untrained muscles, at first. After a good dinner at the Farragut House we were ready to proceed, but were detained, until quarter past 4, by a violent thunder storm, which we were quite content to witness from the piazza of the hotel rather than experience on the ocean. Tried our sails again, but made slow progress, so stowed them and paddled along the shore to the entrance of Portsmouth Harbor, where, at 6 o'clock, we hauled out and passed a very comfortable night at the Wentworth House. The distance from Newburyport to Portsmouth is, by the way we went, about twenty miles, which we accomplished in a trifle more than five hours.

Wednesday, 11th. Started again at 9, A. M., with the wind ahead. A fine sunny day, which we fully realized before night by the impression it made on our arms and backs, which became as red as a boiled lobster, and felt about as comfortable, probably, as one when boiling. At 10:15 passed Whalesback light, and soon after sighted the "Nubble," a curious-looking object, not unlike a huge egg, with a light-house perched on the top of it. At York, which we reached soon after noon, we were glad to cool our heated limbs by a plunge in the surf. Had a good dinner after a hard struggle, on account of the numerous summer guests recreating there, and shoved off again at 2:15. No fair wind to-day, so had to paddle steadily, and we were not loth to point our bows in shore when we arrived off Wells Beach. Landed at 6 and made snug for the night. A pretty hard day, with little wind, and the sun beating down on us all the way. Turned in after a hearty supper, but it did not seem more than five minutes before it was morning, and we as hungry again as though we had not tasted food for a week.

Thursday, 12th. Off at 9:15 A. M. A fine cool morning without a ripple on the water. Cape Porpoise, away in the dim distance, was our objective point. To reach it we had to cross an arm of the sea twelve miles wide. As the sky was clear and the sea calm, however, we ventured it, instead of following the coast, and, after a steady pull of nearly three hours, we were safely over. After doubling the cape we hoped to cut off another good piece, between us and Saco, by going through a creek. We noticed that the tide was pretty well out, and asked a fisherman if we could get through. "Oh, yes, with them things," was the encouraging reply. So we started in among the islands. Before getting far in, another fisherman was a little doubtful about our getting through, but was sure we would not have to wait more than twenty minutes, any way, and suggested that, if we got stuck, we could take our ships under our arms and walk over. As we should cut off a couple hours of hard work, or hoped we should, we took courage and proceeded. Soon passed another man, in a boat, who informed us that we should have to wait an hour. This did not dismay us, as he might be mistaken, so we pushed on. The creek grew narrower and shall-

lower, and at last there was no water at all. It did not look as though the tide would ever cover the huge rocks and rubbish that extended as far as the eye could reach; so, in desperation, we backed out, as cheerfully as the circumstances would admit. Moral: Do not fool with mud creeks at low water. We did not reach the Point of Rocks off Biddeford Pool until 2:25. P. M., and were rather drearily lunching on a bit of hardtack, when our friend, Mr. Joseph W. Smith, who, from the piazza of his hotel, had espied the two little specks out on the water, as we were passing, drove quickly down to the Point, and hailed us, and we paddled round into the harbor at the Pool, and had the pleasure of dining with him. We intended to go on immediately after, to Cape Elizabeth for the night, but as we had already experience enough for one day, there being no wind, concluded to remain where we were, which decision we did not regret, as we found we had fallen among friends.

Friday, 13th. Started at 8:30, A. M., the water still as a mill-pond, the sun shining brightly, and a gay party giving us a good send-off. At 11:30 passed Richmond Island, when we spread sails and slanted over to Cape Elizabeth, where we dined quite comfortably at the hotel. At 2:15 proceeded again, and had a fine run down to Harpswell, at the mouth of Portland Harbor, which we reached at 6:30. A fine breeze made the water quite choppy, but the little boats behaved beautifully, and we enjoyed this, our first good sail, very much. Our covers, which fitted snugly around us, and our rubber coats protected us from the water, which sometimes seemed to cover the whole canoe as she plunged under a high wave. One charm about this kind of sailing is the delightful freedom from having to retrace one's course in order to get home again before night—often midnight—as we carry our homes with us for the time being.

Saturday, 14th. Started at 8:30, A. M., though it was raining a little. The paddle across to Cape Smallpoint was against quite a head sea. Shipped a number of white caps which drenched us, since we could not paddle in overcoats, but the exercise kept us in a glow, and we passed safely over. At 11:30 passed the lonely island of Seguin, with its solitary light-house perched on its high cliff. Then came an hour of rugged work as we paddled across the mouth of the Kennebec, against wind and tide, and waves higher than our heads. If we had known what was in store for us when we started in the morning we should not have left Harpswell so willingly. After fairly getting off, however, there was no turning back, as we might have been swamped in attempting it. But I do not consider that we were in any particular danger so long as we could keep head on to the waves and make any progress, as our buoyant little canoes, completely covered in, shed the water quickly and safely. They required all of our attention though, and we did not idle much until we were safely over, and in behind a sheltering island, where we stopped at 1 o'clock for rest and lunch. Got into some dry clothes and shoved off again at 2:30, bound for Mouse Island, some fifteen miles distant. The wind had gone down, and so we had to rely upon muscle alone. At 4 we were off Old Harbor, or Cape Newagin, rejoicing that the roughest part of our journey was well over. Rain troubled us not a little, and at one time we stopped under an old fish-house, built on piles, and let it pour for a good hour. It

was a leaky shelter though, and reminded us of the Shakspearean gaberdine. But it was getting late and we had to push out into the shower and make the best of our way to Mouse Island, which we reached at dark, and, hauling our canoes above high water mark, we sponged out the little water that had stolen in—expected to find much more—put on the covers, locked them up, and, with our portmanteaus, walked up to the hospitable hotel for Sunday. We changed our wet clothes, had supper, and slept in a closet, which, however, we did not mind a bit. I believe we could have slept on a picket fence, though of course we were thankful that we did not have to try.

Sunday, 15th. Rested—that is, most of the day. We considered it a work of necessity to take a run up the river to Boothbay to dry our sails, there was such a drying breeze!—but we did not continue our journey until

Monday, 16th, when we shoved off at 8, A. M. Quite a party saw us start, in our good clothes, and waved to us, with good wishes, until we were out of sight around the first point; then we landed and got ready for work. Outside found a strong breeze blowing, to which we hoisted our sails. The little masts bent under it, and we bowled along at an exciting pace, our little sharp bows cutting through the water like a knife. The sea was quite smooth, our course being behind sheltering islands most of the way. At 10:50 rounded Pemaquid Point, where we were tossed about a little, but we could stand anything after the Kennebec river experience. At Marshall's Island we dined at 1 o'clock, a pail of nice milk from the lighthouse helping us out. Another sail of four hours, past the beautiful Camden hills, brought us to the Mussle Ridges, with the finest breeze behind us we had yet felt. How we did skim over the water! At 8:30, hauled out at Owl's Head for the night. We expected to sleep at Tennant's Harbor, but learned that the only hotel there had been burned. With the tide in our favor it was no hardship to paddle on a while, after losing the breeze with the sun. The last five miles were made under a bright moon, which was a very pleasant novelty. Progress, to-day, thirty-two miles.

Tuesday, 17th. Were delayed in getting off by my companion's steering geer being out of order. A little box of tools, which formed part of our outfit, enabled us to repair the damage, and at 8:30, A. M., we paddled away for the North Fox Island, which we reached at 1 o'clock, and dined upon our pilot bread and milk. At 2:30 our afternoon breeze brisked up again and carried us flying to Eagle Island, where we put up at the lighthouse for the night.

Wednesday, 18th. Our next stop was to be at Southwest Harbor, Mount Desert Island, the blue mountains of which we could just see in the dim distance from the lighthouse. Paddled up the bay, with our dandies set, in an hour and a half; made seven miles, and entered Egamoggin Reach. The steamer Lewiston, from Mt. Desert, gave us a friendly "toot" as she passed us, her passengers craning their necks at us as though we had been the sea serpent. A brisk breeze was blowing against us. At 1:20, P. M., bread-and-milked on the end of Pond Island, and resumed our paddles again at 3 o'clock. Southwest Harbor, with a stiff northeast breeze and a bay full of white caps between, was twelve miles distant, but there was nothing to do but to push on, though we had been working hard since morn-

ing. At quarter past 5, passed Bass Harbor light without accident, which we considered good time. Tried our sails on changing our course a little, but, not making satisfactory progress, clewed up and paddled round to the harbor, not reaching there until past 7, after a hard day's work against the wind all the way. Supper was over at the hotel, but the good-natured deacon had a steak cooked for us, which we immediately swallowed and called for more. Our appetites were not entirely appeased until about 9 o'clock, and then we had to hunt up a bed, every room at the hotels being full. We got through the night somehow. I know we slept soundly and breakfasted heartily. Paid our one dollar each cheerfully, wondering if the good deacon made any money out of his summer boarders, espe-

cially canoeists, and at 10, A. M., bore away for Bar Harbor, the end of our journey, which we reached at 2 o'clock, having made two hundred and seventy-five miles in our jolly little boats, in ten working days of about seven hours each. The pleasure of our trip was such that we really felt regret that it was so soon over.

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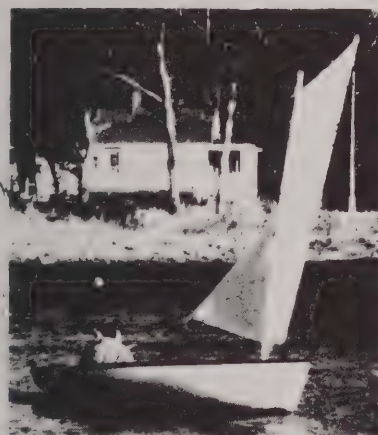
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For those of us who go cruising in small boats on a short budget, piloting is still pretty much a matter of the old "three L's:" log, lead, and lookout.

The fancier class of yachtsman have long since traded in the patent log and leadline for electronic mojo boxes that can now tell them how deep the water is, where they are, where they're going, when they'll get there; some are so clever they ought to be able to tell us when we're fun.

There have been great advances in the technology of looking out. The first spyglass must have been a step forward for the captain who used it, and each improvement in optics had made the lookout's job easier. Fancier yachtsmen now use radar to mount a lookout on their boats, and as long as the thing works, and as long as they don't hit a log that's just barely awash, they're fine.

Certainly radar is a great tool for looking out. With all those dials and controls, it's almost as much fun to play with as a PacMan game, and on a foggy night a well-tuned radar is like a blessing from heaven. I've worked on a number of boats that were equipped with radar, and have grown attached to the comforting noise it makes, a sort of whine/click, whine/click that lets you know it's working.

The problem with radar is that it's expensive, it draws electricity, it's bulky and ugly when mounted in the rigging of a sailboat, and yacht-quality radar often doesn't work well, and is nearly impossible to repair in the out of the way places most cruisers dream of going to. My own boat is a Sparkman and Stephens yawl, and there's no way in the world that I would install radar on board, which leaves me with the traditional problem of mounting a good visual lookout.

Other boats, ledges, buoys, docks, floating logs; all these things can be avoided only after they're seen. So it's logical to think that keeping a good lookout is the first step in avoiding collisions, groundings, being lost, having to call out for help, and in other ways making a fool of yourself on the water.

This isn't much of a problem on a big boat, where there are people to steer and work the boat while you devote yourself to the critical question of whether that nun buoy over there, all covered with guano and hove down in the current is a number "6," or is that an "8?" Once you've made up your mind you put the binoculars back in their nifty teak rack, make an "X" on the chart that's spread out on the chart table, and go on in certainty and bliss. Or better yet, have the hired captain do it, either before or after he makes you a bloody mary.

On a small boat, sailing shorthanded, it doesn't go that way. She's dancing around on one ear instead of forging along smoothly, the chart is folded up and shoved under a cockpit cushion where you can look at it for a moment without jibing, and instead of leisurely peering through the binoculars you get occasional snatches when she gets on top of a wave and rolls back so you can see out under the boom and over the backs of the waves.

For that kind of sailing I've found a pair of expensive binoculars are not the right piece of gear. They take up too much room, and in the inevitable hard knocks of life on a small boat they get left on the leeward cockpit seat, and then you tack and they take a run and land in the footwell, and something gets out of whack so that when you look through them one eye would be looking in one direc-

tion, and the other one would be looking just a little to the left. Far enough to make everything appear double, and bad enough so that a few minutes staring through the thing would give you a really exquisite headache.

When I first started cruising, I used a pair of regular 7x35 binoculars, which were just fine. Then mine got banged, and I got into the habit of closing one eye when I used those binoculars, and discovered that I couldn't tell any difference between looking with one eye and looking with both. They say that binoculars give you depth perception that is lacking with a single lens device like a spyglass, which may be true, but I couldn't see it. An open-minded person can try this out; look through a pair of binoculars and close one eye. If you can see a difference your eyes are better than the fifteen people I asked to try this test.

Once I had proved this to my own satisfaction, I wanted to buy what they call a monocular. This isn't a monocle, one of those things that Prussian barons use to accent their dueling scars. A monocular is really nothing more than half of a pair of binoculars. It's different from a spyglass because the light passes through a prism, which is what gives a pair of binoculars their strange shape and compact size. It seemed to me that a monocular would offer advantages in ruggedness and small size that would more than offset any lack of depth perception.

Soon enough I discovered that a monocular cost about as much as a pair of binoculars, and aren't readily available with the large lenses that are so useful for visibility in poor light. Being a cheapskate, I didn't like the idea of paying the same price for half as much, so I decided to repair my damaged binoculars.

With a few small tools and some native ingenuity, I took apart the center pivot of the binoculars, and got the two oculars, or whatever they're called, apart. Eureka! as they say in the inventing business. Right there on the table were a couple of monoculars.

This probably doesn't rank with the invention of sliced bread, but it pleased me. The assembly that used to accommodate the center pivot bolt offered a secure point to run a bit of line through, so I spliced up a suitable lanyard out of 3/16" line, and had a couple of monoculars. Since then I've noticed that junk shops sometimes have damaged binoculars with at least one good ocular, and will usually sell them for cheap.

There are some limitations to this rig. For one, the focusing screw doesn't work very well. At first I tried to rig up some clever artifice, and then realized that the traditional sailor's spyglass focused by sliding the eyepiece in and out, and in some ways this system is better. The eyepiece is a tight fit, and there's enough friction to hold it in one place when it's adjusted. The monocular is short enough to be held in the palm of one hand in such a way that your fingertips can adjust the eyepiece. If you twist it a little it's easier to focus it in or out.

It's possible to pull the eyepiece right out of the body, which is probably a bad thing, since salt and moisture can get in. My monocular has worked like that for eight years and is still pretty good, so this may not be too big a problem. Also, the eyepiece by itself makes a pretty nice loupe. Held close to something it magnifies many times, offering large views of slivers in your finger, the edges of plane irons, cracks in swaged rigging terminals; that sort of thing. It would be easy enough to rig up the binocular focusing screw on one of the two monoculars, leaving the other a slide-focuser.

A monocular is small enough to hang comfortably around your neck while you do other things. With a pair of binoculars strapped on you might look pretty romantic, like Field Marshall Rommel or somebody, but when it comes to doing something useful in the cockpit of a boat they get in the way immediately. That's when you set them down, and a minute later you tack, and clunk, there goes the binoculars.

A monocular can fit in your pocket, you can climb into the rigging with it, and when you're travelling it can be shoved inside a deck boot where it is safe from the attentions of baggage handlers.

Visitors to your boat will be puzzled by your arcane gear, and might make the assumption that you know what you're doing. Thieves might decide that the black market for odd-looking monoculars is cold, and leave them alone. If the ghost of Joshua Slocum comes by as you clap this modern day spyglass to your eye, he'll probably growl "age, me hearty," or whatever ghosts of that ilk growl when they're pleased.

Looking through one eye causes a certain amount of eyestrain. I find that this isn't a problem when piloting and keeping a lookout, because I'm only looking through the monocular for a few minutes in an hour. It probably won't work so well for bird watchers or peeping toms, people who spend hours with their eyes glued to the eyepiece. But people whose interest run in that direction usually have a good pair of powerful binoculars, and that's the last thing you want knocking around on deck of a small boat.

Another useful feature of having a couple of these monoculars on board is that you have a spare; useful if you drop one overboard. Also useful if somebody else on board wants to look too. When they start tugging at your arm and saying "lemme see, lemme see," you can hand them the spare and shut them up.

A glass of this type is useful at night or in poor visibility. You can use the free eye to locate a buoy or other boat, using normal vision, and then shut the free eye and open the eye looking through the glass for a closer view. This sounds strange, but is a common technique for people who shoot rifles with telescopic sights, and is also useful for taking star sights with a sextant.

Perhaps the best part of this whole rig is that it's cheap. When conditions are bad and spray is flying you have enough to keep you busy without worrying about a pair of expensive binoculars.

If you have a beat-up pair of binoculars you can try them out as monocular. If you don't like it, you can put them back together again and have your binoculars. Don't do

this with your uncle's favorite Zeiss binoculars, or you might find yourself on the short end of his will. But most boaters have an old pair of binoculars around, and even if you have a better pair, these cheap and rugged monoculars will save the good ones for better use.

Now I'll climb into a pulpit for a brief sermon on decorum and spyglasses. When we're cruising we spend a good part of our days in the open cockpit, enjoying the air and the scenery. Certainly a handsome boat deserves a lingering glance filled with appreciation. But gawking at people through a spyglass when they're on board their boat seems to me just as rude and stupid as peeping through the windows of their home.

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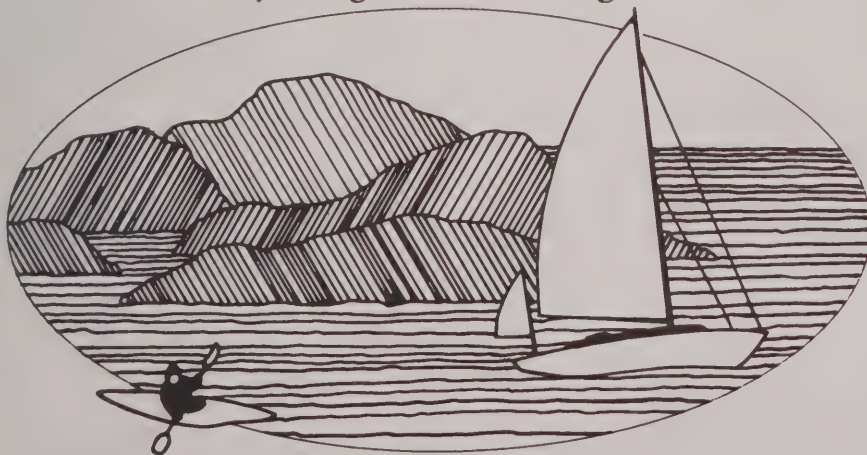
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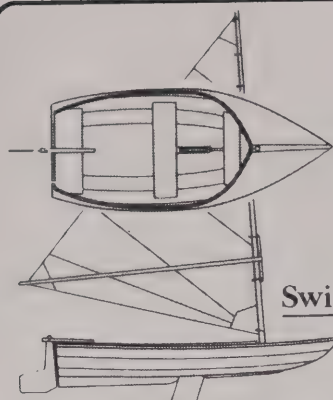
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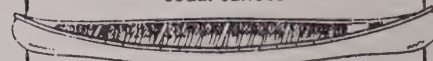
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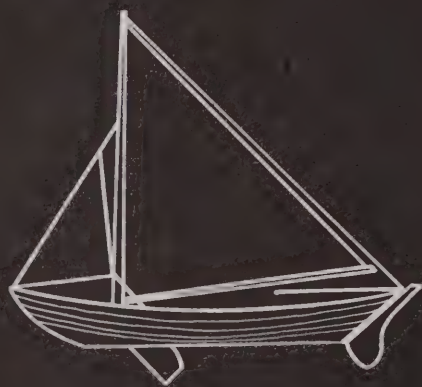
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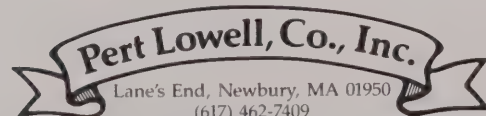
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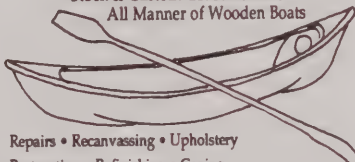
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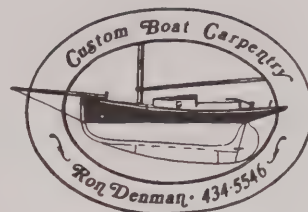
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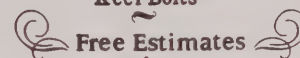
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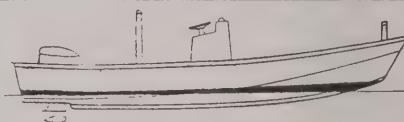
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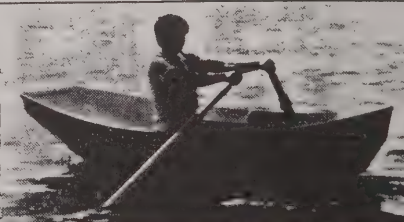


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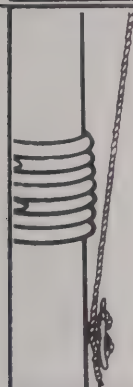
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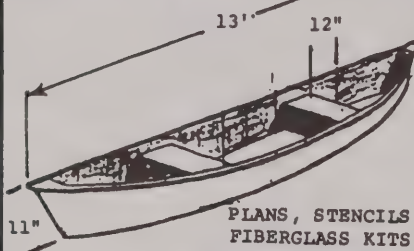
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A Mystery Launch

Going on the auction block this coming August at the Shipyard Museum's annual Antique Boat Auction in Clayton, New York, will be a lovely small launch whose origins have only recently become clouded in mystery. Purchased in Fort Lauderdale years ago by Robert Cox, who has a summer home on New York's Thousand Islands and who is a founder of the Shipyard Museum, the launch carried a Florida registration describing it as a Herreshoff, built in Bristol, Rhode Island in 1926. Cox, who has many years of experience with antique boats, assumed the 13' craft was in fact a Herreshoff because the quality of its construction matched the legendary Herreshoff workmanship, but he believed the boat was incorrectly dated.

A careful examination of the entire list of small craft and yachts created by Herreshoff Manufacturing revealed that there was only one boat the new acquisition could possibly be, a yacht tender, "Starboard Launch" built in 1914 for the schooner "Katoura". This dating of the launch agreed with a letter received in 1973 from Mr. A.G. Herreshoff, son of the famed N.G. Herreshoff, who agreed that it certainly looked like a boat designed by his father, but that it was probably built nearer 1916 than 1926.

Cox, a Herreshoff fan for many years, completely restored the launch and then offered it as a gift to the Herreshoff Marine Museum in Bristol. Mr. Halsey Herreshoff, grandson of the "Wizard of Bristol" came to Fort Lauderdale, inspected

it, and was so enthused about the gift that he immediately had the boat transported to Bristol in the spring of 1989.

The Herreshoff Museum thanked Cox for the gift, saying in their letter of acceptance, "this boat is absolutely unique, her history is extremely interesting, her fine condition resulting from your restoration and care make her one of the finest acquisitions of the Herreshoff Marine Museum."

In subsequent months there apparently began some doubts as to the authenticity of the launch. It was reported that old time Herreshoff employees could not identify it as having been built by Herreshoff and suggested that it might be a fine example of English yacht building.

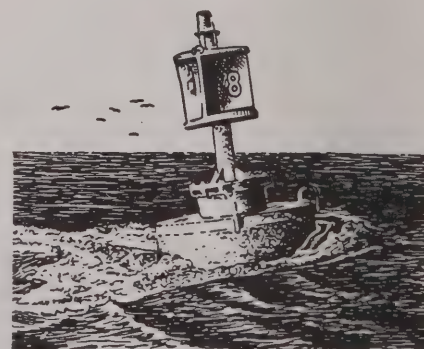
Cox will pick up the boat in Bristol at the beginning of this summer season and transport it to the Shipyard Museum in Clayton, where he will enter it in the annual Antique Boat Auction scheduled for August 4th. "I have too many antique boats at this point," says Cox, "and I just hope someone out there who appreciates such fine craftsmanship would like to carry on further detective work concerning the little yacht tender's lineage."

The 13' craft, powered by a small Kermath engine, has typical yacht tender seating and an outboard rudder, with a double planked mahogany hull, unusual in so small a craft. Serious inquiries from potential bidders can be directed to Robert Cox, 1900 S.E. 15th St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316.

And Now "MacTides"

For those of you who are also computer junkies as well as messers about in boats, reader John Callahan of Lowell, MA, sent us information about "MacTides", software for running on Macintosh computers that enables you to work up any sort of tidal information you desire anywhere around the continental U.S.A., Alaska, and the Canadian Maritime provinces. Eight discs provide all of this, running geographically from Newfoundland around to British Columbia, hopping overland from Texas to California. A couple of versions are offered for different printout systems.

A detailed brochure is available from Nautasoft Inc., Box 282, Rockland, DE 19732, (800) 999-5221.



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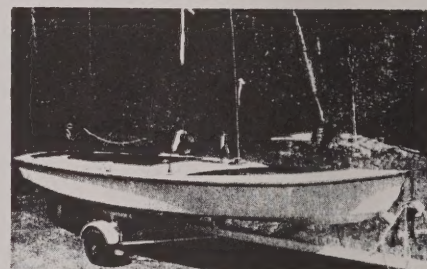
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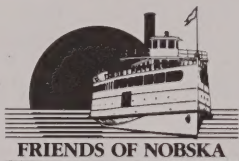


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AND AMATEUR, AND LOOK OVER THEIR BOATS.

TOUR THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS OF STRAWBERRY BANKE AN
HISTORIC WATERFRONT COMMUNITY, ENJOY THE HOMES AND
GARDENS AND CRAFT SHOPS.

VISIT THE 70' PISCATAQUA RIVER GUNDALOW "EDWARD H.
ADAMS" MOORED NEARBY ON THE WATERFRONT.

VIEW (OR TAKE PART IN) THE TRADITIONAL PULLING
BOAT RACES ON THE RIVER ADJACENT TO THE MUSEUM.

INFORMATION AT (603) 433-1100 DAYS

BOAT SHOW ADMISSION INCLUDED IN REGULAR MUSEUM GATE ADMISSION
ADULT \$8 - CHILD OVER 6 \$4 - FAMILY GROUP \$22

"Three rousing cheers for
"Messing About in Boats" and the
good people at Strawberry Banke for
putting together the nicest little
boat show I've participated in dur-
ing my 16 year career in this
trade. The "Boat Builders' Day"
was small and simple, yet had an
elegant atmosphere. The boats dis-
played represented a fascinating
cross-section of attractive and ver-
satile small craft. It served to re-
mind me once again that it is the
interesting and decent people as
well as the love of good little boats
that keeps me in this business.

While at the show next year,
be sure to take in the Strawberry
Banke Museum itself, and then vis-
it the beautiful waterfront park
across the street with its gardens,
and the nearby historic buildings
of this old seaport."

Roger Crawford